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○ ISSUE 1 | ○ VOLUME 4 | ○ 2010

WNY YOUNG WRITERS' *studio*

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2010

Rebecca Smith and Catherine Cornwell were inspired to write stories based on the imagined adventures of their beloved American Girl dolls. How can you gain inspiration from the things that matter most to you?

Writing from the Heart

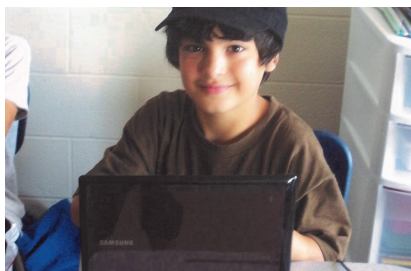
Persevering as a writer is no small feat. Sticking with a piece through revision after another can be an overwhelming task, particularly if you are writing about something that doesn't matter to you. This isn't what your time at Studio should be devoted to. As we come back together this fall, consider taking a cue from two of our youngest writers: Becca and Cat. Last summer, these young ladies discovered a shared passion for their American Girl dolls, and this planted the seeds for some interesting pieces of writing.

My daughter Nina has been wrapped up in the Percy Jackson series this fall, and this has influenced the creation of some of her

own myths. Laura started a photography blog last summer, and she's consumed with research about her ancestry now, thanks to her Social Studies teacher, Mr. Davies. These are things that matter to them, and because they matter, they never feel like work.

What matters to YOU right this minute? What are YOU curious about? How can you turn the things that matter into writing topics that will keep you motivated?

This will be one of the topics we tackle at our next session. I hope you'll be willing to share your own ideas and experiences. We have a lot to learn from you!



READY TO PUBLISH????

There are many venues available for those interested in sharing their writing this year! Please join our ning, and you will be able to publish blog posts, share works in progress, or publish a completed piece of work for celebration. You can find it at <http://wnyywss.ning.com>.

You may also write a guest post on our studio blog (<http://wnyyws.org>), submit a piece for our anthology (published in May), or explore contests and markets at our next session. If you have something to share, please let Angela know at our next session!



Collaborative Writing: Making it Work

Andrew, Patrick, and Dan hard at work on the draft of the stop-motion video they created last summer.

How Do You Know if You're Ready to Collaborate? Use This Checklist to Help You Decide

- ☐ I know what my strengths are as a writer.
- ☐ I've felt successful as an independent writer.
- ☐ I'm eager to share what I know and use my skills to contribute to a collaborative project.
- ☐ I am comfortable letting others lead and take charge some times.
- ☐ I have the time and energy to follow through on this project.
- ☐ I am willing to set up some guidelines and strategies for problem-solving.
- ☐ I know how to advocate for myself when my partner is doing too much or too little.
- ☐ I accept problems as an inevitable fact of collaborative work. I don't take it personally when things go wrong.

Over the years, numerous collaborative writing projects have sprung up within and beyond Studio sessions. Regardless of the purpose, the genre,

or the participants in such work, successful collaborative writing

endeavors have tended to have a few things in common. First, those who join in the fun have typically come to know who they are as writers and what their unique talents are. This provides them the confidence to assert their ideas and allow others to do the

"There is no such thing as a self-made man. You will reach your goals only with the help of others."

GEORGE SHINN,
OWNER OF THE CHARLOTTE
HORNETS BASKETBALL TEAM.

same. As the project begins, teams typically decide how the process will unfold, how each person's strengths can contribute to the whole of

the work, and how problems will be solved as they inevitably occur. Finally, successful groups don't avoid disagreements and con-

flict. They develop strategies that enable them to overcome these hurdles. Interested in starting a collaborative writing project? Bring your ideas to our next session, and together, we can help you identify a team of other interested writers to work with!

GOING IT ALONE: Fire-walling



There are times when collaborative writing isn't a good choice. When you are working on a piece that is distinctly your own, when you haven't had the chance to establish yourself as a confident and competent writer, or when those you are eager to work with haven't developed good collaborative skills, it makes more sense to go it alone.

Good writers also recognize the importance of fire-walling their work. This means that they keep their work private until they feel ready to share it with readers who know how to give meaningful feedback. Sometimes, it takes a while to find people who have this ability. The peer-review process we use in Studio enables it well!

See You in October!

Our October sessions are coming soon!

Fellows in grades 2-5 will meet from 9-11am, and those in grades 6-12 meet from 12-2pm. Teachers who plan to attend should arrive one half hour prior to the start of the session.

Our annual Celebration of Writing will be held on Saturday, June 4, 2011. The time and place are yet to be announced, but we plan to bring Daemen and Kenan writers together on this day to recognize all that we've accomplished!

If you aren't able to join us for any of the sessions listed for your location below, please let Angela know as soon as possible! This influences our lesson planning and our costs for the day!

Daemen Dates: All Sessions to Be Held in Room 219 of Duns Scotus Hall
October 23
December 18
February 19
April 16

Kenan Center Dates: See Locations Below
October 16 in the arena
December 11 in the Taylor Theater Meeting Room
February 12 in the arena
April 9 in the Taylor Theater Meeting Room